

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-20 are currently pending. Claims 1, 3, 4, 6-9, 11, 13, 15, and 17-20 have been amended by the present amendment. The changes to the claims are supported by the originally filed specification and do not add new matter.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,901,430 to Smith (hereinafter "the '430 patent").

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for the interview granted Applicants' representative on October 26, 2006, at which time a proposed amendment to the claims was discussed. In particular, amending the independent claims to clarify the pre-existing relationship between the customer and the sales staff was discussed. At the conclusion of the interview, the Examiner indicated that such amendments might overcome the cited prior art. However, no formal agreement was reached, pending the formal submission of a response to the outstanding Office Action.

Amended Claim 1 is directed to a server device, comprising: (1) a customer-information storage section which stores customer information regarding at least one pre-existing customer, wherein the customer information regarding the at least one pre-existing customer was obtained in a registration process for each pre-existing customer; (2) a staff-information storage section which stores staff information regarding at least one sales-staff in association with the customer information stored in the customer-information storage section; (3) a communications section which sends and receives predetermined information to and from at least one customer terminal and at least one sales staff terminal which are connected with each other through a communications network; (4) a product-information sender which sends predetermined product information to the at least one

customer terminal through the communications section; (5) a contact-information receiver which receives contact information sent, to any sales staff, from the at least one customer terminal in association with the product information sent by the product-information sender, through the communications section; (6) a customer information acquirer which acquires customer information regarding a pre-existing customer corresponding to the at least one customer terminal from the customer-information storage section, in response to the contact information received by the contact-information receiver; (7) a staff-information acquirer which acquires staff information regarding a specified sales staff associated with the pre-existing customer, from the staff-information storage section, in association with the customer information acquired by the customer information acquirer; and (8) a sales-information sender which sends the customer information acquired by the information acquirer and the product information sent by the product information sender to a targeted sales staff terminal through the communications section in accordance with the staff information acquired by the staff information acquirer. Claim 1 has been amended to clarify that the customer is a pre-existing customer, and that the customer information regarding the pre-existing customer was obtained in a registration process for each pre-existing customer. The changes to Claim 1 are supported by the originally filed specification and do not add new matter.

The '430 patent is directed to an on-line system of locating a consumer product having a specified configuration in an enterprise production pipeline and inventory. The '430 patent discloses that inventory can be searched in an inventory database for products matching or substantially matching the product configuration data and that products matching the consumer's input are shown to the consumer.

However, Applicants respectfully submit that the '430 patent fails to disclose a server device having a customer information storage section which stores customer information

regarding at least one pre-existing customer, wherein the customer information regarding the at least one pre-existing customer was obtained in a registration process for each pre-existing customer; and a staff-information acquirer which acquires staff information regarding a specified sales staff associated with the pre-existing customer from the sales staff information storage section, in accordance with the customer information acquired by the customer information acquirer. Applicants respectfully submit that the '430 patent fails to disclose the pre-existing nature of the relationship between the customer information and the staff information recited in amended Claim 1. The system disclosed in Figure 19 of the '430 patent is directed to a method of processing leads received by a customer who might be interested in buying a vehicle, but does not disclose a staff information acquirer which acquires staff information regarding a specified sales staff associated with the pre-existing customer, as recited in amended Claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of Claim 1 (and dependent Claims 2 and 3) is rendered moot by the present amendment to Claim 1.

Independent Claims 4, 6-9, 11, 13, 15, and 17-20 recite limitations analogous to the limitations recited in Claim 1. Moreover, Claims 4, 6-9, 11, 13, 15, and 17-20 have been amended in a manner analogous to the amendment to Claim 1. Accordingly, for the reasons stated above for the patentability of Claim 1, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of the independent claims is rendered moot by the present amendment to those claims.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that independent Claims 1, 4, 6-9, 11, 13, 15, and 17-20 (and all associated dependent claims) patentably define over the '430 patent.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment and in light of the above discussion, the outstanding grounds for rejection are believed to have been overcome. The application as amended herewith is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

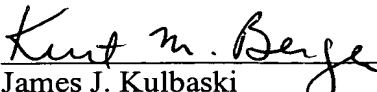
Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,  
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.

Customer Number

**22850**

Tel: (703) 413-3000  
Fax: (703) 413 -2220  
(OSMMN 03/06)

  
James J. Kulbaski  
Registration No. 34,648  
Attorney of Record

Kurt M. Berger, Ph.D.  
Registration No. 51,461

JJK/KMB/law

I:\ATTY\KMB\218'S\218915US\218915US-AF1.DOC